(also of the same kind) that had taken refuge in the bamboo basket (a little more than 2-foot across at its mouth and about 12 inches deep) she uses for conveying kitchen refuse to the municipal refuse-bin. The centipede had its head and tail inside the upside-down basket and about 2 in. of its middle section exposed on top: remembering past experience, I seized this middle section in a pair of long-nosed pliers and lifted the centipede out. To my surprise the entire basket came up, and I had to hold the basket down with one hand to extract the centipede with the other, so powerful was the grip of its legs on the woven bamboo. Since I had injured it badly, I killed that centipede with a slap of my chappal, and in the process noticed that this species of centipede does not glow all over with a phosphorescent glow when so killed as the reddish brown centipede, slightly smaller and thinner and common in houses, does.

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23. A NOTE ON THE DISCOVERY OF THE MALE OF *ACRITOCHAETA DISTINCTA* MALL. (DIPTERA, MUSCIDAE)

Acritochaeta distincta (Syn. *Atherigona distincta* Mall.) was first collected from Guindy, Saidpet, S. India in 1909 by W. S. Pattton and described by Malloch (1923). The author described the species from a series of 6 specimens. The holotype ♀ and 3 ♀♀ paratypes are deposited at the British Museum (Natural History). The male was not described. Subsequently, two further specimens of the female were taken from Calcutta in 1907 and 1915 and are also lodged in the British Museum.

In the course of work at ICRISAT at the break of the monsoon in 1976, when intensive surveys of shoot-flies present in local grasses and cultivated cereals were conducted using square pan water traps baited with fish meal, a very large number of an unusual *Acritochaeta* were attracted and caught. Most of the specimens were female, but males were also present. Specimens submitted to Mr. A. C. Pont at the British Museum were identified as *A. distincta*. The male of the species needs to be described at some future date.

Data from traps in the period mid-May to mid-July (20.5.76 to 17.7.76) showed that of a total of 2780 *Atherigona* and *Acritochaeta* specimens attracted to 20 traps sited at various representative locations at ICRISAT Research Centre, 313 were males. Of these males, 84% (266) were *Acritochaeta distincta*. Some 248 of these were all taken at one particular trap. Detailed investigation over the next 3 weeks confirmed these data in that in the period 18.vii.76 to 7.viii.76 of 8677 flies taken, 816 were males of which 80% were *A. distincta*. At this stage, whereas 554 males of the species were all recovered from one trap it was observed that traps at 3 other sites became productive. It was clear that traps in proximity to the palm, *Borassus flabellifer* L. (Palmae), were the productive ones. Investigation of rotting palm nuts revealed large numbers of eggs, larvae and pupae of *A. distincta*. These are as yet undescribed, but specimens have been lodged at the British Museum (NH) for inclusion in any revision of the genus carried out. The host

plant of the insect is not recorded in Malloch & Rao 1925.

In the period 8.viii.76 to 19.viii.76 when trapping was discontinuous, the numbers of *A. distincta* fell considerably and an allied species *Acritochaeta orientalis* became dominant. A significant observation was the relatively localised nature of the occurrence of the fly and its apparent seasonality. This has implications with respect to the study of *Atherigona soccata* Rond., sorghum shoot-fly which is being contined at ICRISAT since it indicates that in this related insect diapause between the fruiting seasons of the palm occurs.

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24. MORMON BUTTERFLY—ITS STATUS IN BOMBAY

With the rains and the wet weather would emerge our true 'Spring' and with it would start a number of butterflies flitting about displaying their showy colours for the joy of the natuarlist. It is the right time for a butterfly enthusiast to keep a look out for that showy butterfly, the Mormon *Papilio polymnestor*. In Bombay and Salsette among the 120 or so species of butterflies recorded, this insect has been put down as 'very scarce', though numbers of it may be encountered in certain years.

E. H. Aitken (EHA) commenting on the butterflies in the collection of the Bombay Natural History Society admitted in 1887 that he did not understand the distribution of the butterfly and that it is absolutely unknown in Bombay and imagined that it was so throughout the Konkan, but became one of the most familiar species as soon as one reached a level of 2000 ft. According to EHA the butterfly did not occur in the Deccan generally, but in Poona it frequented old gardens in the city.

In response to EHA's comments W. F. Melvin recorded in the Society's *Journal* two ragged but strong in flight specimens in Sivadi (present Sewree in Bombay) woods and the cemetery in March 1889. J. A. Betham recalled of having seen it frequently at Dapoli (70 miles south of Bombay in S. Konkan) in his early days and how its appearance in their